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ABSTRACT

This self-instructional module on developing ads that produce results is the sixth in a set of twelve modules designed for small business owner-managers. Competencies for this module are (1) identify three guidelines to be considered when you invest money in advertising, (2) identify the five basic elements of a printed advertisement, and (3) identify four guidelines to be considered in the development of radio and television commercials. Provided are information sections relating to the module competencies, two learning activities (the design of a business ad and preparation of a 30-second radio commercial), one pamphlet from the Small Business Administration ("Measuring the Results of Advertising"), and a script from a cassette tape designed for use with this module. (The final report of this project is available as CE 017 858.) (JH)

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PURPOSE

Everyday the consumer is bombarded by hundreds of newspaper ads, radio and TV Commercials, direct mail appeals, and other forms of commercial advertising. With all of this competition for the consumer's attention, is it really worthwhile to advertise? The answer is yes, if you are willing to take time to carefully develop advertisements.

COMPETENCIES

Upon completion of this module you will be able to:

1. Identify three guidelines which should be considered when you invest money in advertising.

2. Identify the five basic elements of a printed advertisement.

3. Identify four guidelines which should be considered in the development of radio and television commercials.

INSTRUCTIONS

Before reading the material which begins on page 2, listen to the cassette entitled "Developing Advertisements that Produce Results."

SCRIPT

DEVELOPING ADVERTISEMENTS THAT PRODUCE RESULTS

INTRODUCTION:

Effective advertising can ba an important form of communication with present or potential customers. Although competition for the shopper's attention is very strong, carefully planned advertisements will produce results. What are the characteristics of effective advertisements? Let's join Sue Perez, manager of a yarn shop, and Frank Walker, manager of a shoe store, as they discusss this question.

SETTING: FRANK WALKER'S SHOE STORE

SOUND EFFECT: TINKLE OF BELL AS SUE ENTERS THE STORE.

Sue: Hi Frank. I'm back again for more advice. Hope you are not getting tired of seeing me.

Frank: No, in fact I am dying of curiosity. How is your new business doing?

Sue: Well, I think OK. But, I've never been in business before. Customer traffic has been slow, but maybe that is to be expected.

Frank: I saw your grand opening advertisement in the paper. How did things go?

Sue: Well--we didn't break any sales records the first week, but many people did come in and look around. We gave away a great deal of free coffee and donuts. (BOTH LAUGH)

Frank: Sound familiar. During my grand opening I sold only three pairs of shoes. We must have had a least 100 people sign up for the door prize.

Sue: Well, I know it will take time to develop my business. I stopped today because I am interested in spending more money on advertising, but I don't want to waste it.

Frank: Have you talked to Ted Davis at the Daily Times? He has given me lots of good advice over the years?

Sue: Oh, yes, he has been very helpful, but I feel the need to visit with someone who has a business similar to mine. I have always admired your advertisements.

Frank: Thanks for the compliment Sue. But I want you to know that I made many mistakes in the beginning.

Sue: My biggest concern is the competition for the customer's attention. Someone told me the average consumer is exposed to over 1000 visual and verbal messages every day! Is it really worthwhile to advertise?

Frank: I know how you feel. However, it is not a hopeless situation. You can increase the odds that customers will see or hear your advertisements.

Sue: How?

Frank: First, advertise when your customers are most likely to purchase yarn. What are the peak sales periods in the yarn business?

Sue: I'm not sure. I expect yarn sales to be up during the fall and winter months.

Frank: Well, keep good records and then you will know when to increase your advertising budget. Advertise when you are most likely to attract customers.

Sue: What else do you suggest?

Frank: Well, you should position your advertisements so they reach the maximum number of people who will purchase yarn. In regard to newspaper advertising, your best bet might be an ad on the women's page of the Daily Times. If you use radio, schedule your commercials at the most suitable time for your customers.

Sue: That's a good suggestion. Do you have any tips on how frequently I should advertise?

Frank: I don't know how often you should advertise, but I do know that many merchants waste money by advertising too infrequently. And furthermore, many of the advertisements I see conflict with the image of the firm.

Sue: What do you mean?

Frank: Recently Ray Simmons, manager of Simmons' Pharmacy, used the word "discount" in a newspaper advertisment. The type used in the ad was very large. The advertisement was not at all consistent with other ads he has used in the past. This approach to advertising can be confusing to the customer. I know that Mr. Simmons is not trying to communicate a "discount" image.

Sue: I think I understand what you are saying. We often form an opinion about a business based on very little information.

Frank: Unfortunately, yes. Customers prejudge us by our window displays, appearance of the store front, our advertisements, and a variety of other things. My advice to you is to develop a somewhat unique advertising style and stay with it.

Sue; How can I develop a unique style? I don't understand what you mean.

Frank: Let me use newspaper advertising to illustrate my point. Most effective newspaper advertisements feature five basic elements: headline, copy, illustration, logo, and layout. It is possible to use each of these elements to create your own unique style. Have you noticed that Rand's Dress Shop ads generally look alike even though each presents a different product.

Sue: Yes, the ad border gives the appearance of fine lace. They use the same border to frame all their ads.

Frank: Also, they never vary the letter style and the store logo appears in every advertisement.

Sue: You have been very helpful. Do you have anymore good tips before I leave?

Frank: Yes. You need to be aware of what advertising will not do for a business. It will not make up for poor products or poor services. It will not bring about dramatic changes in sales volume in most cases. And finally, it will not make up for poor treatment of customers.

Sue: I will keep that advice in mind. Thanks for taking time to visit with me. I will keep you posted on my progress.

Frank: You are most welcome. Come back any time.

CONCLUSION:

Competition for the customers attention is very keen. Therefore, we must give attention to several factors which will influence the impact of your message. It is possible to waste money by advertising too little or too much. We must position advertisements properly in order to reach a specific group of customers. Advertising plays an important role in forming the image of your business. Therefore, you don't want to develop advertisements which conflict with the image you hope to project. Now let's move to page 2 and take a closer look at the process of developing advertisements that produce results.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

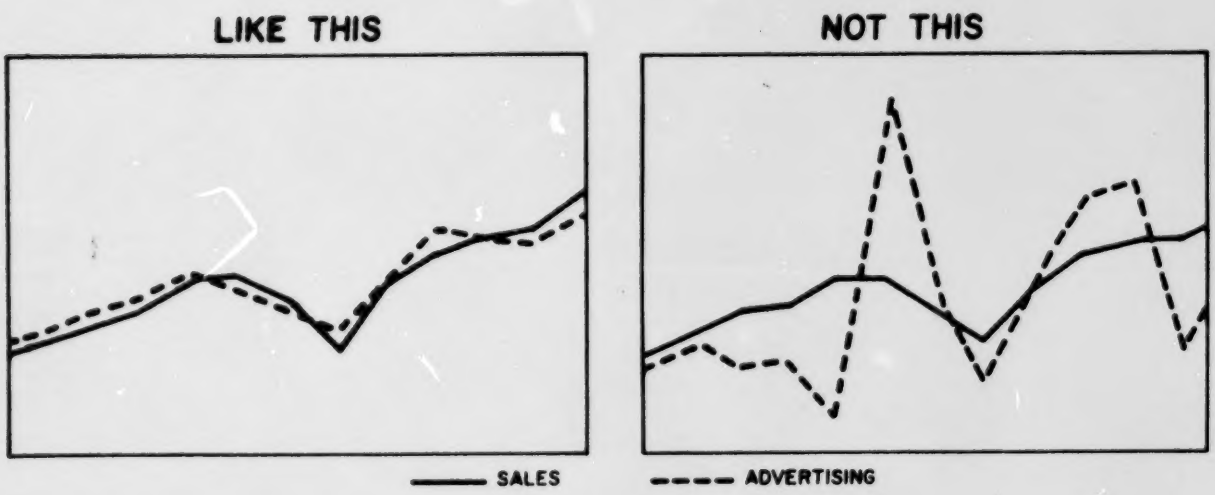
A major cause of business failure among new retail, wholesale, and service type businesses is low volume sales. Many business firms simply do not attract the number of customers needed to stay in business. In today's competitive marketplace, drawing more customers to your business is essential to maintain or increase profit. One way to increase customer traffic is to develop a series of effective advertisements that will attract the attention of clientele you wish to serve.

This module provides an examination of factors which tend to increase the impact of all advertising. In addition, it will feature tips on how to utilize specific media such as newspaper or radio.

COMMON SENSE GUIDELINES

There are a series of common sense guidelines which should be considered by all persons who invest money in advertising.

1. From the standpoint of timing, the amount of money spent on advertising should parallel projected sales volume. You should develop a sales and advertising pattern which, month by month looks --



For example, the operator of a lawn and garden center should increase the amount budgeted for advertising during the spring planting season. Many business firms fail to observe this practice.

2. Position your advertising so it will attract the attention of potential customers. The owner of a sporting goods store might determine that ads placed in the sports section of the newspaper reach the largest number of potential customers. The owner of a camping park might position radio commercials on Thursday and Friday in order to reach potential week-end campers. Regardless of which media is used, one should position the advertisement so as to reach a specific audience.

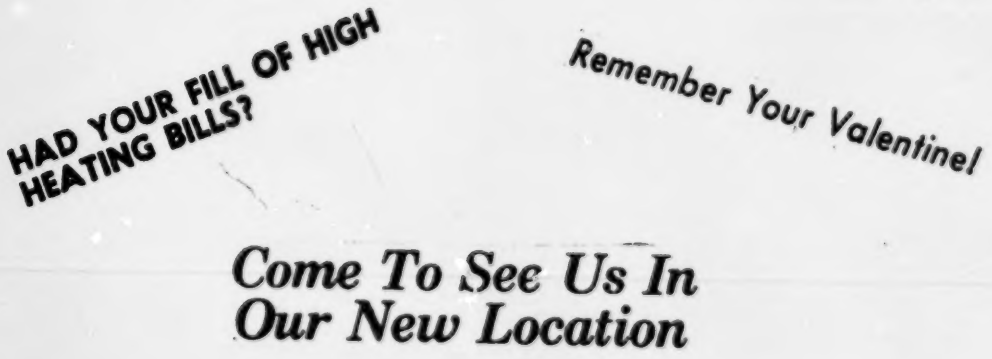
3. Avoid conflict between the advertising message and the image you wish to project. For example, a store selling fine jewelry should avoid newspaper advertisements which feature wide, dark borders and large black print. These features would communicate a "discount" image. All advertising should complement the firms' image.

NEWSPAPER AND DIRECT MAIL

Newspaper advertising is the most popular media used by small retail, wholesale, and service type businesses. Direct mail has also proven successful for some small merchants because it reaches a specific, pre-selected audience. There are several similarities between these two forms of printed media, so they will be treated in the same section.

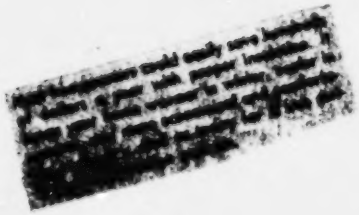
A printed advertisement usually features five basic elements. Each of these elements serve to strengthen the advertisement and therefore should be given careful consideration.

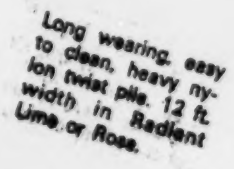
1. Headline: The first important element of the ad is the headline. To attract attention, the headline must be prominent and should be near the top of the ad. It should also be large enough to be easily seen.



2. Illustration: The second basic element of the printed ad is the illustration. One of the most important principles of personal selling is to get the merchandise into the customer's hands. In a newspaper ad, we can't get the merchandise into the customer's hands, but we can show the product in action or in an attractive setting whenever possible.

3. Copy: The third element of a printed ad is copy. Copy should be thought of as a printed sales story. It should arouse interest, create desire, and stimulate action. With the aid of copy, we can supply the consumer with important product information.





4. Layout: The fourth basic element of a printed ad is layout. The headline, illustration, signature cut, and copy must be carefully placed to insure a high degree of readership. The layout should be simple and feature good eye appeal. Ads which are crowded in appearance often fail to attract readers because they tend to blend into the entire printed page.

5. Identification: The fifth element of a printed ad is identification. Every advertiser should develop a distinctive advertising style so the reader will immediately associate the ad with the business. The signature cut (logo) will help the customer identify the firm. The ad border and style of print can also communicate the identity of the business.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

Radio and television advertisements provide an additional way to attract customers. Radio advertising is the second most popular media used by small business owner-managers. Television can be an effective media for certain businesses, but the cost is very high.

To prepare a commercial for either radio or television, keep in mind the following points:

1. Try to get the listeners attention early. The first 5 to 10 seconds of the commercial should feature attention getting words. Keep the entire message simple and to the point.

2. Don't provide the customer with too much information. A commercial can be too long. When a commercial is too long, listeners may lose interest and "tune out." In some cases a 30 second commercial may be more effective than a 60 second commercial.

3. Audience turnover occurs throughout the day, so it may be necessary to repeat the commercial in order to reach all potential customers.

4. The person who presents the information should have a good speaking voice and communicate sincerity and enthusiasm.

SUMMARY

All efforts to utilize advertising must be coordinated with other sales promotion activities. Window or interior displays may be built to complement advertisements. Sales personnel should be informed of all advertising efforts so they can assist customers who visit the store. Of course the merchandise and/or services advertised must be available in sufficient quantity.

Finally, it is important to remember that advertising <u>does</u> have limitations. We should not expect advertising to:

--improve poor products or services

--make up for poor treatment of customers

--bring about immediate changes in the image projected by the firm.

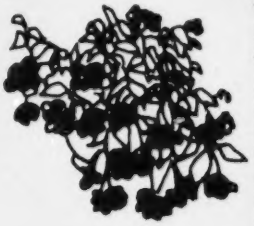
--dramatically increase sales volume overnight.

NOTE: Please turn to page 7 and complete learning activity number one.

LEARNING ACTIVITY NUMBER ONE

A series of "product" and "service" oriented newspaper advertisements appear on this page. Each ad features at least four of the five basic elements. Study each advertisement and then in the space provided on the following page sketch an ad which would be appropriate for your business. If possible, your advertisement should feature all five of the basic ad elements.

REMEMBER YOUR VALENTINE



Geraniums $1.50

Foliage by Henri

602 South Watson Road 921-6157

CUSTOM TAILORED CLOTHING AND ALTERATIONS

One Day Service, Plain Bottoms, Cuffs

All Workmanship Fully Guaranteed

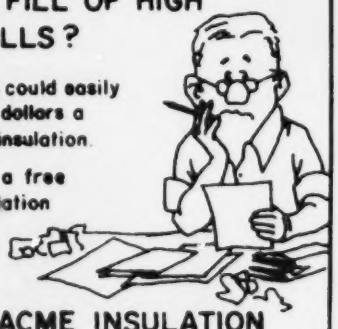
JIMMY WALKER, TAILOR

608 NORTH ANDERSON 951-0209

HAD YOUR FILL OF HIGH HEATING BILLS?

Most homeowners could easily save hundreds of dollars a year with proper insulation.

Call us today for a free estimate and insulation analysis.



ACME INSULATION

201 Windsor Norfolk

CALL 852-2411

NOTE: Please turn to page 8 and complete learning activity number two.

LEARNING ACTIVITY NUMBER TWO

A radio commercial prepared by a representative of a radio station appears below. This commercial is approximately 30 seconds in length. Use this script as a model and prepare a commercial which would be suitable for your business. Your commercial should cover a time period of 20 to 30 seconds.

Sample Commercial

"Your future is important enough to start paying special attention to it right now. The way to do it is to check with us, the Bank of Hillsville, because it's free...free checking--with no minimum balance and no service charge. The Bank of Hillsville suggests that the modern way to pay bills is better--makes more sense! With a free checking account you merely sign your name and the bills are paid. Your canceled checks are your receipts. A free checking account at the Bank of Hillsville is a good way to protect yourself from loss by carrying too much cash. So, unless you have money to burn, check with us, the Bank of Hillsville, because it's free...free checking with no minimum balance and no service charge. Start your checking account now at the Bank of Hillsville--the bank serving everybody. It's the business-like way to handle your money. The Bank of Hillsville, your full service bank, serving you on the Square since 1888. With a convenient branch office on the Syracuse Road. Member F.D.I.C."

Your Commercial

NOTE: Please turn to page 9 and review the preferred reading list.

PREFERRED READING LIST

This instructional module is designed to introduce key concepts regarding ways to develop ads that produce results. For a more in-depth examination of this topic area, study the following preferred reading.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION SMALL MARKETERS AIDS

#121 "Measuring the Results of Advertising"

NOTE: You have now completed the module requirements. You may wish to review this module or advance to another module.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
U. S. Government Agency

Small Marketers Aids

No. 121

Washington, D.C.

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MEASURING THE RESULTS OF ADVERTISING

By Elizabeth M. Sorbet

Associate Professor of Marketing, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi

If you are new to the retail or service business, you may still be learning about advertising through trial and error. Perhaps you watch your competitors and run ads when they do. Or you run an ad only when you can offer a bargain.

Whether you are a newcomer or a veteran advertiser, you should always keep one question foremost in your thinking: How much good is my advertising doing?

In a small firm, neither time nor money is sufficient to engage in complicated ad-measurement methods. But even so, you can use certain rule-of-thumb devices to get a better idea than you may now have about the results of your advertising.

WHAT RESULTS DO YOU EXPECT ?

Essentially, measuring results means comparing sales with advertising. In order to do it you have to start early in the process--before you even make up the advertisement. The question to answer is: What do you expect the advertising to do for your store?

In thinking about the kinds of results to expect, it is helpful to divide advertising into two basic kinds: immediate response advertising and attitude advertising.

Immediate response advertising is designed to cause the potential customer to buy a particular product from you within a short time--today, tomorrow, the weekend, or next week. An example of such decision-triggering ads is one that promotes regular price merchandise with immediate appeal. Other examples are ads which use price appeals in combination with clearance sales, special purchases, seasonal items (for example, white sales, Easter sales, etc.), and "family of items" purchases.

Such advertising should be checked for results daily or at the end of 1 week from appearance. Because all advertising has some carry-over effect, it is a good idea to check also at the end of 2 weeks from appearances, 3 weeks from appearances, and so on to insure that no opportunity for using profit-making messages is lost.

Attitude advertising is the type you use to keep your store's name and merchandise before the public. Some people think of this type as "image-building" advertising. With it, you remind people week after week about your regular merchandise or services or tell them about new or special services or policies. Such advertising should create in the minds of your customers the attitude you want them to have about your store, its merchandise, its services, and its policies.

It is your reputation builder. To some degree, all advertising should be attitude advertising.

Attitude (or image-building) advertising is harder to measure than immediate response advertising because you cannot always attribute a specific sale to it. Its sales are usually created long after the ad has appeared and are triggered by the customer some time after having seen the ad. However, you should keep in mind that there is a lead time relationship in such advertising. For example, an ad or a

SUMMARY

Because his budget is limited, the owner-manager of a small retail or service firm must see that his advertising does the job he intends it to do. Measuring the results on a continuing basis can help him to see that his ads keep the store's name before the public and contribute to increasing sales.

Planning is important. Before he can evaluate results, the owner-manager has to know what purpose he expects the ad, or ads, to accomplish. This Aid gives pointers on planning ads and discusses several devices which can be used to compare advertising and sales.

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series of ads that announces you have the exclusive franchise for a particular brand probably starts to pay off when you begin to get customers who want that brand only and ask no questions about competing brands.

In short, attitude advertising messages linger in the minds of those who have some contact with the ad. These messages sooner or later are used by people when they decide that they will make a certain purchase.

Because the purpose of attitude advertising is spread out over an extended period of time, the measurement of results can be more leisurely. Some attitude advertising--such as a series of ads about the brands which the store carries--can be measured at the end of 1 month from the appearance of the ads or at the end of a campaign.

PLANNING FOR RESULTS

Whether you are trying to measure immediate response or attitude advertising, your success will depend on how well the ads have been planned. The trick is to work out points against which you can check after customers have seen or heard the advertisement.

Certain things are basic to planning advertisements whose results can be measured. First of all, advertise products or services that have merit in themselves. Unless a product or service is good, few customers will make repeat purchases no matter how much advertising the store does.

Many people will not make an initial purchase of a shoddy item because of doubt or unfavorable word-of-mouth publicity. The ad that successfully sells inferior merchandise usually loses customers in the long run.

Small marketers, as a rule, should treat their messages seriously. Humor is risky as well as difficult to write. Be on the safe side and tell people the facts about your merchandise and services.

Another basic element in planning advertisements is to know exactly what you wish a particular ad to accomplish. In an immediate response ad, you want customers to come in and buy a certain item or items in the next several days. In attitude advertising, you decide what attitude you are trying to create and plan each individual ad to that end. In a small operation, the ads usually feature merchandise rather than store policies.

Plan the ad around only one idea. Each ad should have a single message. If the message needs reinforcing with other ideas, keep them in the background. If you have several important things to say, use a different ad for each one and run the ads on succeeding days or weeks.

The pointers which follow are designed to help you plan ads so they will make your store stand out consistently when people read or hear about it.

Identify your store fully and clearly. Logotypes or signatures in printed ads should be clean-lined, uncluttered, and prominently displayed. Give your address and telephone number. Radio and television announcements to identify your sponsorship should be full and as frequent as possible without interferring with the message.

Pick illustrations which are all similar in character. Graphics--that is, drawings, photos, borders, and layout--that are similar in character help people to recognize your advertising immediately.

Pick a printing type face and stick to it. Using the same type face or the same audio format on radio or television helps people to recognize your ads. Also using the same sort of type and illustrations in all ads allows you to concentrate on the message when examining changes in response to ads.

Make copy easy to read. The printed message should be broken up with white space to allow the reader to see the lines quickly.

Use coupons for direct mail advertising response as often as possible. Coupons give an immediate sales check. Key the coupon in some manner so that you can measure the response easily.

Get the audience's attention in the first 5 seconds of the radio and TV commercial. Also, get your main message in the first sentence if possible.

TESTS FOR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE ADS

In weighing the results of your immediate response advertisements the following devices should be helpful:

Coupons brought in. Usually these coupons represent sales of the product. When the coupons represent requests for additional information or contact with a salesman, were enough leads obtained to pay for the ad? If the coupon is dated, you can determine the number of returns for the first, second, and third weeks.

Requests by phone or letter referring to the ad. A "hidden offer" can cause people to call or write. Include--for example, in the middle of a paragraph--a statement that on request the product or additional information will be supplied. Results should be checked over a 1-week through 6-months or 12-months period because this type ad may have considerable carry-over effect.

Split runs by newspapers. Prepare two ads (different in some way you would like to test) and run them on the same day. Identify the ads--

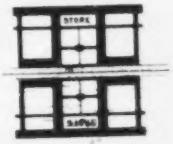
in the message or with a coded coupon--so you can tell them apart. Ask customers to bring in the ad or coupon. When you place the ad, ask the newspaper to give you a split run--that is: to print "ad A" in part of its press run and "ad B" in the rest of the run. Count the responses to each ad.

Sales made of particular item. If the ad is on a bargain or limited-time offer, you can consider that sales at the end of 1 week, 2 weeks, 3 weeks, and 4 weeks came from the ad. You may need to make a judgment as to how many sales came from display and personal selling.

Check store traffic. An important function of advertising is to build store traffic which results in purchases of items that are not advertised. Pilot studies show, for example, that many customers who are brought to the store by an ad for a blouse also bought a handbag. Some bought the bag in addition to the blouse, others instead of the blouse.

You may be able to use a local college or high school distributive education class to check store traffic. Class members could interview customers as they leave the store to determine: (1) which advertised items they bought, (2) what other items they bought, and (3) what they shopped for but did not buy.

TESTING ATTITUDE ADVERTISING



When advertising is spread out over a selling season or several seasons, part of the measurement job is keeping records. Your aim is comparing records of ads and sales for an extended time.

An easy way to set up a file is by marking the date of appearance on tear sheets of newspaper ads, log reports of radio and television ads, and copies of direct mail ads. The file may be broken down into monthly, quarterly, or semi-annual blocks. By recording the sales of the advertised items on each ad or log, you can make comparisons.

In attitude (or image-building) advertising, the individual ads are building blocks, so to speak, which make up your advertising over a selling season. The problem is trying to measure each ad and the effects of all of the ads taken together.

One approach is making your comparisons on a weekly basis. If you run an ad, for example, each week, at the end of the first week after the ad appears, compare that week's sales with sales for the same week a year ago. At the end of the second week, compare your sales with those of the end of the first week as well as year-ago figures.

At the end of the third week, 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months from the appearance of the ad, repeat the process even though additional ads may have appeared in the meantime. For each of these ads, you will also make the same type of comparisons. You will, of course, be measureing the "momentum" of all of your ads as well as the results of a single ad.

After a time, you probably will be able to estimate how much of the results are due to the individual ad and how much to the momentum of all of your advertising. You may then make changes in specific details of the ad to increase response.

When comparing sales increases over some preceding period, allowances must be made for situations that are not normal. For example, your experience may be that rain on the day an ad appears cuts its pulling power by 50 percent. Similarly, advertising response will be affected by the fact that your customers work in a factory that is out on strike.

Some of the techniques which you can use for keeping on top of and improving attitude advertising follow:

REPEAT

Repeat an ad. If response to an ad is good, run it--without change--two or three times and check the responses of each appearance against previous appearances.

Keep repeating the process. Much advertising loses effectiveness because the advertiser doesn't keep reminding people. Repetition helps increase knowledge of, and interest in, the product. You can soon estimate how often you should repeat each ad--exactly or with minor changes.

Analyze all ads in relation to response. Divide ads into at least two classes: high-response ads and low-response ads. Then look for differences between the two classes.

The time the ad was run may be responsible for a particular response level. Other factors, however, may be just as much or more influential than time. Consider the feature subject used in the illustration, persons shown, activities shown, types of merchandise, settings or backgrounds, different colors used. Also consider the message and how well it was expressed. Did the copy stick to the theme? Or did it wander? If slogans were used, did they help make the point?

Graphic elements may be important. Check to see which response category is associated with the presence of coupons, borders, display lines, small or incidental illustrations. Check response in relation to any variation in the way each appears. Compare any difference in type size and design or the boldness of the type.

Emphasis on brand names should also be checked. Price figures should be analyzed. If

price lines are involved either in the ad or in the merchandise line of which the advertised product is a part, you should consider them also.

Check the size of the ad. It usually has a bearing on response. As a general rule, the larger the ad, the greater the response.

Try to see a pattern of dominance. Your analysis of high-and-low response ads, may show that certain details--such as certain picture subjects--make the difference between a high or low response. Try to find the combinations which work best for your firm and merchandise.

Note changes occurring over time. A small retailer should never take a winning combination for granted. There is no single formula that will insure high response ads every time. Advertising changes. Therefore, you should watch the ads of others to see what changes are occurring. Continue to analyze your own ads, make small changes occasionally, and note any variations in response.

Listen to what people say about your ads. In doing so, try to discover the mental framework within which any comment about your ad was made. Then try to find points which reinforce believability and a feeling that your product fulfills some wish or need.

However, you should not be misled by what people say. An ad can cause a great deal of comment and bring in practically no sales. An ad may be so beautiful or clever that as far as the customer is concerned the sales message is lost.

WHEN YOU USE SEVERAL MEDIA

When your ads appear simultaneously in different media--such as the newspaper, on radio and television, in direct mail pieces, and as handbills--you should try to evaluate the relative effectiveness of each. You can check one printed medium against the other by using companion (the same or almost identical) ads in the newspaper, direct mail, and handbills.

You can make the job of analyzing and comparing results from among the media easier by varying your copy--the message. Your ad copy, thus, becomes the means of identifying your ad response.

You can check broadcast media--radio and TV--by slanting your message. Suppose, for example, that you advertise an item at 20 percent reduction. Your radio or TV ad might say something like this. "Come in and tell us you want this product at 20 percent off."

You can compare these responses with results from your "20 percent off" newspaper ad. Require the customer to bring in the newspaper ad--or a coupon from it.

Some of the ways to vary the copy are: a combination of the brand name with a word or some words indicating the product type; picture variations; size variations; and color variations. You might use the last three to check your printed ads against each other as well as against your radio and TV ads.

Be careful that the copy variation is not so great that a different impression is received from each medium. Here you would, in effect, have two different ads.